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NEWSLETTER

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Dubai businesses more upbeat on improving market conditions

With the Expo 2020 and a big surge in the inflow of tourists expected to revitalise commercial activity, businesses in Dubai are getting more upbeat on improving market conditions and strong prospects for international reach, Dubai Economy said.

The quarterly survey of Dubai Economy showed that the proportion of firms anticipating improvement in business situation in the first quarter of 2020 has increased to 60 per cent, from 58 per cent for the previous quarter, with the Expo 2020 and tourist arrivals expected to energise commercial activity.

In a statement, Dubai Economy said while softer demand, lower margins and less projects have had an impact in the last quarter of 2019 when 19 per cent businesses rated their performance as below par, the first quarter of 2020 is expected to bring in new purchase orders, increased volumes and more jobs.

- Asma Saber Al Sheemi had a successful career in digital marketing before quitting in 2013 to focus on raising her children. However, as the years progressed, the feeling of being unproductive haunted her. "I placed my children as my priority, but I also wanted to achieve my ambitions and be successful at the workplace," the 31-year-old Egyptian national said.

- In 2018, Al Sheemi decided to launch an online platform called 'more than a mother'. It offers free vocational courses to empower stay-at-home mothers with necessary skills to freelance and work from home. Her project came after she faced a series of challenges to find a job as a mother

UAE expat launches free online courses to empower stay-at-home mums



- The UAE Federal Customs Authority (FCA) will launch a first-of-its-kind mobile van to detect drugs, explosives and other banned substances on people on the move on highways, along the borders and inside cities on February 26, an official from the authority told Gulf News on Sunday.

- The van, which is fitted with special metal and luggage detectors, can detect illegal substances and drugs being carried by smugglers, irrespective of where they may be within the country

UAE launches van to detect drugs, explosives on people





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New temple coming up at Jebel Ali in Dubai

Dubai: A sprawling new Hindu temple will come up in Jebel Ali in Dubai by early 2022, *Gulf News* can reveal.

This is in addition to the BAPS Temple coming up at the Abu Dhabi-Dubai border.

Last week, the trustees of the existing Sindhi Guru Darbar Temple held a Bhoomi Pujan (breaking ground ceremony) at the new temple site which is located next to the Guru Nanak Darbar Gurudwara which opened in 2012.

Speaking to *Gulf News*, Raju Shroff, one of the trustees of the Sindhi Guru Darbar Temple, said: "The new temple is an extension of the existing Sindhi Guru Darbar Temple in Bur Dubai and will be run by a core group of trustees. We have managed to secure land measuring 25,000 square feet from the Dubai government and the temple will be built at an estimated cost of Dh75 million."

Dubai Council will be catalyst for change

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice-President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, began 2020 with a bold vision for the government.

At his request, the newly formed Dubai Council will lead six critical sectors - economy, government services, development, infrastructure, justice and security, and health and knowledge. As part of a drive for government efficiency over the next five years, leaders will need to meet 50 goals, which are being developed.

The aim of this vision is to build on the city's growth and ensure Dubai remains one of the world's best cities to live in. How will the Dubai Council achieve this bold goal?

Dubai: Get smart medical fitness test, visa stamp in 30 minutes now

Dubai: VIPs, investors and holders of the golden residency visa can complete their medical fitness tests, get their results and visa stamped, all within 30 minutes, at Smart Salem, Dubai Health Authority's (DHA) first fully Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven autonomous medical fitness centre in Dubai. The smart medical fitness test comes for Dh700.

In what will be a completely new experience at the centre located in City Walk, customers will be able to give their car to a smart VIP valet service. As Maisa Al Bustani, Director of the Medical Fitness Services Department at the DHA, said, "The service combines facial and plate recognition to identify them so that the car can be recalled when their journey is completed autonomously."



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Sheikh Mohammed honours Arab Hope Maker on February 20



The show will also see the announcement of the Arab Hope Maker 2020.

The third edition of the Arab Hope Makers initiative will crown the winner on February 20 at a grand show to be headlined by renowned artists, it was announced on Friday.

Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the event will honour this year's Arab Hope Maker, who dedicated resources and efforts to serve humanity.

For the first time since its inception, the initiative will adopt an "Arab Humanitarian Cause of the Year", which will continue on an annual basis. This year, the variety show's ticket proceeds will go towards supporting the construction of Magdi Yacoub Global Heart Centre - Egypt.

Sheikh Mohammed tweeted: "Arab Hope Makers initiative attracted 92,000 humanitarian projects from 38 countries worldwide in its third round. In the UAE, we have unwavering hope and optimism in our ability to make a positive difference in our societies. On February 20, we honour the exceptional role models.

"This year, we dedicate the proceeds of the Arab Hope Makers final grand show to support the new Magdi Yacoub Global Aswan Heart Centre in Cairo, a noble humanitarian cause that aims to provide free cardiac care to vulnerable communities.



UAE economy grew at 2.9% in 2019, says central bank

The UAE economy grew by 2.9 per cent in 2019 as compared to 1.7 per cent in the previous year, mainly driven by growth in the oil sector, the Central Bank said in its fourth-quarter report.

"The overall real GDP is estimated to have grown by 2.9 per cent in 2019, driven by the growth in the non-hydrocarbon sector - estimated at 1.1 per cent and by the hydrocarbon sector for which growth is estimated at 7.6 per cent in 2019. The hydrocarbon sector exhibited significant growth, mainly due to the two-digit growth in condensates and natural gas production," the Central Bank said in the report.



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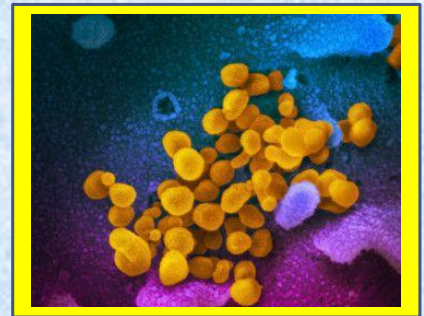
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Global events cancelled due to Coronavirus

From trade exhibitions and fashion shows to sports and examinations, some of the world's biggest events are being cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak.

More and more organisers are pulling events over fears of spreading the potentially deadly disease, with many thousands of attendees having to alter travel plans.

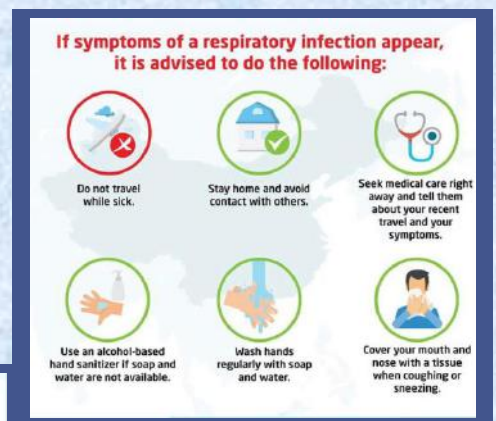
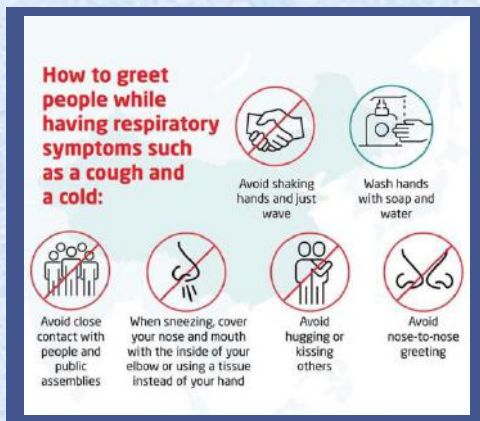
The most high-profile cancellation so far has been the Mobile Worlds Congress, in Barcelona, which was due to take place at the end of this month.



UAE calls off cycling race, quarantines two hotels

The UAE yesterday cancelled a major cycling race after two Italians tested positive for the coronavirus, setting off a quarantine that ensnared four-time Tour de France winner Chris Froome. The Abu Dhabi Sports Council's decision to cancel the UAE Tour 2020 comes as the virus rapidly spreads across the Middle East, with over 500 confirmed cases.

What you need to know about coronavirus, precautions to take, emergency numbers to call and more





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How 100% Dubai traffic fine discount scheme helped UAE residents



As Dubai's 100 per cent traffic fine discount scheme ends today, residents who were given a respite from paying 'massive fines' called the scheme a 'blessing'.

According to a brief release issued, the Dubai Police reminded motorists that Thursday was the last day to avail of the year-long discount scheme that offered up to 100 per cent waiver on traffic fines.

The scheme was launched on February 7, 2019, a first-of-its-type initiative, according to which motorists who did not commit any violations for three months could get a 25 per cent discount on their fines.

Furthermore, no violations for six months would entitle them to a 50 per cent discount. Keep driving well for nine months and you could get a 75 per cent discount and 100 per cent discount if you didn't commit any violation in a year.

VAT exemptions for schools in UAE: FTA releases circular



Abu Dhabi: The Federal Tax Authority, FTA, launched the "Basic Tax Information Bulletin" as part of its campaign for 2020, as it seeks to continue raising awareness about taxes and providing taxpayers with periodic and detailed tax information.

In its first edition, the bulletin focuses on tax treatment for the education sector, including schools, pre-schools, and nurseries.

Latest UAE fuel prices: March 2020



The Ministry of Energy and Industry on Thursday announced fuel prices for the month of March, with prices set to go down compared to February.

The per-litre prices are Super 98 at 2.16, down from Dh2.24 last month and Special 95 at Dh2.04, also down from Dh2.12 in February. E Plus 91 will be priced at Dh1.97 per litre.

Diesel prices are at Dh2.25 down from Dh2.40 per litre.

Global prices have gone down, Reuters reported on Wednesday. US crude dropped below \$50, the lowest level since January 2019, as Asia, Europe and oil producing countries in the Middle East reported hundreds of new coronavirus cases and the United States warned of an inevitable pandemic.



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